

Cairo, Egypt, 19 September 2019 – An in-house workshop was convened on 14 February 2019 on setting regional health Research priorities to build consensus on a set of health research priorities based on views of representatives of different technical programmes. The set of health research priorities provided useful resources for Member States as well as RPD 2018-19 Calls for Research in Priority Areas of Public Health RPPH grants and Tropical Disease Research, Small Grant Scheme (TDR-SGS), in addition to similar calls in other technical programmes.

Representatives from different technical departments within the Regional Office, in addition to Tropical Disease Research (TDR)/HQ and Center of Environmental Health Action (CEHA) in Amman participated in the workshop.

The workshop used nominal group technique to reach a consensus about the set of the regional set of research priorities based on the priority health research lists received from different technical departments in addition to WHO country offices. The proposed questions were grouped as per the technical programmes in tables with rating scales (1-9) pertaining to the question's importance and feasibility.

The proposed research questions lists were discussed, clarified and refined during the workshop and rated by each participant during the voting exercise. The outcomes of voting were calculated and converted into percentages.

The list of priorities used for subsequent calls for proposals is provided below.

Communicable disease prevention and control

- Measures to enhance community engagement for implementation of vector control interventions, especially for remote and vulnerable populations
- Innovative approaches for facial cleanliness and environmental improvement components of the SAFE strategy for trachoma elimination
- Burden of sepsis in acute health care settings
- Comparative economic analysis of the impact of hepatitis C prevention and treatment intervention scenarios
- Methods for improving reporting of TB cases and collaboration with the private sector in high TB burden countries

Noncommunicable diseases and mental health

- Barriers, and potential solutions, to implement multisectoral actions on NCD prevention and control
- Impacts of food regulation, legislation and taxes on promoting healthy nutrition including salt, fat and sugar intake reduction
- Cost effective and economic return of reducing sugar intake in the Region
- Comparative effectiveness of care for mental, neurological and substance use disorders by task sharing / shifting among different cadres of health-care providers
- Resource implications of implementing the WHO recommended total risk approach for prevention and management of cardiovascular disease in primary health care

Maternal, neonatal, child and adolescent health

- Individual, socio-cultural and health system related factors behind the growing rate of unnecessary caesarian sections
- Main causes behind low coverage of children <5 years="" with="" suspected="" pneumonia="" receiving="" proper="" antibiotics="" li="">
- Mapping of the implementation of the Health in All Policies approach in the Region using the related regional tool
- Main causes of morbidity and mortality of maternal and children under 5 years
- Assessment of the implementation of the WHO SAVE LIVES road safety technical package in the Region as a comprehensive package and as individual interventions

Environmental health and food safety

- Effect of pesticides residues on fruits and vegetables (especially those eaten raw) on burden of major NCDs (e.g., cancer, cardiovascular diseases)
- Level of awareness (of health professional and decision makers) about the environmental determinants: of cardiovascular diseases, respirational infections and cancers
- Long term health impacts of air pollution in dusty environments
- Effects of long term exposures to chemical contaminants ingested through the diet
- Safety and quality of indoor air especially for children

Health systems development

- Core 10 strategic interventions to strengthen health systems resilience in response to different types of shocks to advance towards UHC (based on global and regional practices in developing countries and fragile states)
- Improving access to medical products using local production and supplier value chains
- Implications of advancing health technologies on the future of health workforce and health workforce strategies
- Dual practice: impact on accessibility and quality of services; proposed regulatory interventions

- Impact of national and hospital-based Health Technology Assessment (HTA) programmes in improving governance and health technology investment decisions

Information, evidence and research

- Barriers and facilitators of different approaches for institutionalization of use of health information in developing health policies
 - Barriers and facilitators of different approaches for institutionalization of use of research evidence in developing health policies
 - Assessing the determinants of sub-optimal death registration coverage in middle income or high income countries in the Region
 - Effectiveness of “health apps”/mHealth interventions in improving health outcomes
 - Assessing the usefulness and validity of different “verbal autopsy” tools in improving cause of death registration in hospital or emergency settings

Health emergencies

- Modes of MERS-COV transmission from animals to humans
- Impact of use of oral cholera vaccines among high-risk population where the vaccines have been introduced
 - Barriers and enablers of use of seasonal influenza vaccines among healthcare workers
 - Monitoring health system/services during emergencies
 - Role of MERS-COV silent/asymptomatic cases in transmission of infections in humans

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